'No Probe Basis' Gurvich Quoted

S-1 6/23/67

Private investigator William H. Gurvich has dropped out of District Attorney Jim Garrison's presidential assassination plot probe and reportedly has told Sen. Robert F. Kennedy that there is no substance to the investigation.

Gurvich met with Sen. Kennedy, brother of President John F. Kennedy, who was shot to death in Dallas Nov. 22, 1963, in Washington June 8 to discuss the probe, without Garrison's knowledge of the meeting.

The National Broadcasting Co. says it has learned that Gurvich told Kennedy that there is "no basis in fact and no material evidence in Garrison's case for an assassination plot."

WILLIAM H. GURVICH

CLAY L. SHAW, 54-year-old retired New Orleans businessman, is under indictment on charges by Garrison that he participated in a conspiracy to murder the President.

Garrison this morning said he could not comment on Gurvich's statements.

A high-ranking member of Garrison's staff said today, however, that Gurvich "has not been part of the Kennedy investigation for the last two months." His departure from

(Turn to Page 8, Column 1)

Continued from Front Page

the probe staff had been kept secret.

Although Gurvich has not been seen around the DA's office for weeks, he previously had been there constantly and, as chief investigator on the probe, had been issuing most of the statements on the probe.

THE DA'S STAFF member, who declined to be quoted by name today, said Gurvich was never part of the DA's regular staff but was brought into the assassination probe for special purposes such as photography.

"I have to point out that it would be impossible for Mr. Garrison or any of us to reply without commenting on the merits of the case. Under the guidelines we cannot say whether or not we have a strong case against Clay Shaw," the staff member said.

A second report of the meeting between Gurvich and Sen. Kennedy was carried today in a copyrighted interview published by Newsday, a Garden City, L. I., newspaper.

Newsday reported that Gurvich was asked if it were true that he told the senator the Garrison investigation was a "hoax." Gurvich said in the interview, "That is absolutely untrue. I think Mr. Garrison believes in what he is doing. He is sincere."

THE ACCOUNT said Gurvich replied "no comment" when asked if he had told Kennedy there was no substance to the investigation. The story said: "Asked why he denied saying the investigation was a hoax but refused to deny he told Kennedy there was no substance to it, Gurvich said, "There's a difference between a hoax and saying there's nothing to it."

Newsday said Gurvich declined to say more about his secret talk with Kennedy but he indicated to the interviewing reporter that he would not keep his silence forever.

"There's a time and place for everything and now is not the time and place," said Gunvich. The newspaper said that Sen. Kennedy refused to discuss the conversation between himself and Gurvich.

Sen. Kennedy issued the following statement through a spokesman: "At Mr. Gurvich's request I spoke to him in Washington recently. I have not discussed the substance of our conversation and I think it would be inappropriate to do so now."

Gurvich, Newsday said, declined to discuss most of what he told Kennedy, but said he had gone to the senator to "clarify whatever I could out of respect for his brother and out of respect for him."

Gurvich called the office of Judge Edward A. Haggerty today and talked with both the

judge and with Lou Gurvich, his brother.

Lou Gurvich said his brother told reporters in New York that he had no comment on the Garrison investigation except to say that he had been to talk with Sen. Kennedy.

HIS BROTHER said he got into a discussion of semantics with New York reporters after the word "hoax" came up. He said he made no comment to reporters regarding the substance of the investigation.

"I can make no comment on the Shaw case because of the guide lines of the court," he said. "I cannot indulge in any comment on the Shaw case." He told his brother he would not talk to any local reporters.

In the interview with Newsday, Gurvich described his meeting with Kennedy.

"I did most of the talking during the first half of the conversation," Gurvich told Newsday. "Then he asked me questions during the second half. I didn't refuse to answer a single question." He said that Kennedy "put aside everything" to hear his account.

WHEN KENNEDY FINALLY had to leave for the Washington airport to catch a plane for an engagement in New York, Gurvich rode in the car with the senator so they could continue their discussion.

At the airport, Gurvich said, he and Kennedy "went to the back of the terminal and sat on the edge of a conveyor" where they talked for another half hour.

At the end of the conversation, Gurvich said, the senator's wife, Ethel, came over and he was introduced to her. He said that before boarding his plane, Kennedy told him he was "extremely grateful for me coming to see him."

Although Gurvich did not

NEW ORLEANS STATES-ITEM

Probe, Gurvich Quoted

give full details of his conversation with Kennedy, he was free in what he had to say about the investigation itself and much of what he told Newsday clashed with claims that have been made by Garrison.

Garrison has said there is a good chance that accused assassin Lee Harvey Oswald "didn't kill anybody." Gurvich said the evidence clearly points to Oswald.

GARRISON'S STAR witness in the case against Shaw, Perry Russo, said recently that he had been told by a National Broadcasting Co. representative that "NBC and the CIA wanted to get Garrison." The statement was made by Russo in connection with an NBC documentary assailing the probe.

Gurvich ridiculed the Russo statement yesterday. "Now tell me," he said, "why should NBC and the CIA want to get Garrison?"

Gurvich was asked if he thought Russo was a credible witness. "No comment," he said.

Gurvich displayed his greatest unease, Newsday said, over the status of Shaw. It was Gurvich who announced the arrest of Shaw March 1.

Yesterday, Gurvich said he was anxious to see that "everyone in the case is treated like a human being. I want to see Clay Shaw treated like a human being." Asked if he thought Shaw had been treated that way, he said, "I didn't arrest him. They (Garrison's men) did."

THOUGH GURVICH knew nothing about the arrest, he was directed by Garrison to announce it. Gurvich said he was in Texas in connection with the investigation when he got a phone call from Garrison telling him of the arrest and summoning him to New Orleans. Gurvich said he had never questioned Shaw.

He said in the Newsday interview that he had not seen Garrison in some time. "I come up here (to New York) and find he's back in New Orleans. He's always traveling around somewhere," Gurvich

JUNE 23, 1967

said. (Garrison was in Monticello, N. Y., last weekend.)

He also said he has not seen Garrison's top assistant prosecutor, Charles Ward, who was in Nassau County to testify yesterday before the grand jury on organized gambling. Ward has been in New York since Tuesday. Gurvich said, "It just didn't work out" for them to get together while they were both in the area."

In his long discussion of the evidence in the Garrison investigation, Gurvich said he had not read the Warren Commission report.

EIGHT FRIDAY

No Basis for Plot